

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. In a cable communication system, a method for a set top box to receive a software  
 2 code object, comprising the steps of  
 3                   receiving a message designating whether to tune to an in-band or an out-of  
 4                   band channel for receiving the code object;  
 5                   tuning to the designated channel; and  
 6                   receiving the code object from the designated channel.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the message includes a download control message  
 2 having a download flag, and further comprising the steps of reading a value of the  
 3 download flag to determine whether to download the code object using an in-band or an  
 4 out-of-band channel
- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the code object comprises platform code, and wherein  
 2 the step of receiving the code object includes downloading the platform code from the  
 3 cable system by using boot code present in the set top box.
- 1 4. The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of designating the in-band or out-  
 2 of-band channel for receiving the code object by means of instructions to a digital access  
 3 controller in communication with the set top box.
- 1 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of designating the in-band or out-of-band  
 2 channel includes adaptively deciding between the in-band or out-of-band channel in  
 3 response to predetermined parameters related to the cable system.
- 1 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising the steps of monitoring available band  
 2 widths of the cable system and deciding between the in-band or out-of-band channel in  
 3 response to said monitoring.
- 1 7. In a cable communication system having at least one digital access controller, and a  
 2 plurality of set top boxes in communication with the digital access controller, the  
 3 improvement comprising:  
 4                   a download control message including a download flag and information  
 5                   related to a download channel frequency, the download flag capable of  
 6                   corresponding to one of an out-of-bound channel and an in-band channel; and

